

Who Are The Murji'ah And What Are Their Beliefs?

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Saihatu Nadhir (with additional Introductory text, from the translator)

Introduction

The Surooriyyah, Khawarij of the Era, consider the likes of Imaam al-Albani, Imaam Ibn Baz and Shaikh Ibn Uthaimen to be Murji'ah since they do not perform takfir, unrestrictedly and absolutely, of the one who does not rule by other than what Allaah has revealed, or upon the one who judges by secular law, or the one who replaces the Sharee'ah unless it is verified that it occurred due to belief, or istihlaal and what is similar to that. And following on from this, everyone who follows the mode of action of these great Imaams, is likewise considered to be an extreme Murji.

The position of Imaam al-Albani is only too well-known to be mentioned on this issue. As for Imaam Ibn Baz, then he states:

"Whoever ruled by other than what Allaah has revealed while knowing that it is obligatory to judge by what Allaah has revealed and that he has opposed the Shari'ah, **yet he makes this matter permissible (istabaaha) and considers that there is not harm upon him to do this and that it is permissible (yajooz) for him to rule by other than the Shari'ah of Allaah**, then he is a kafir (disbeliever) with the major kufr in the view of all of the Scholars; **such as ruling by the secular laws which have been set up by the Jews, Christians or others who claim that it is permissible to judge by them. Or like the one who claims that they are superior than the law of Allaah, or claims that they are equal to the law of Allaah and that a person has been given the choice to judge by the Qur'an if he so wishes, or judge by the secular law if he wishes. So if he believes this [i'taqada] then he has disbelieved in light of the consensus of all the Scholars.**" [Majmoo Fataawaa Samaahat ush-Shaikh Ibn Baaz (3/991-992)]

And he also stated:

The rulers who judge by other than what Allaah has revealed are of different categories. The ruling upon them varies according to their inner beliefs and actions. Hence, whoever judged by other than what Allaah has revealed and considers that to be better than the Shari'ah is a kafir (disbeliever) in the view of all the Muslims. And likewise **the one who makes the secular law a reference point for judgement (man yuhakkim al-qawanin al-wad'iyyah) in replacement (badlan) of the Shari'ah of Allaah and considers that to be permissible** – even if he were to say that judgement by the Shari'ah is superior – then he is a disbeliever, **due to his having made lawful (istahalla) what Allaah has made unlawful.** [Majmoo Fataawaa Samaahat us-Shaikh Ibn Baaz (3/990-991)]

And he said, concerning the secular laws (al-qawanin al-wad'iyyah) specifically: As for those laws which oppose the Shari'ah then no [it is not permissible]. When he institutes these laws, the meaning of this is that there would be no hadd punishment for the fornicator and nor any punishment for the thief or the one who takes intoxicants. This is falsehood, and these laws are falsehood. **When the one in charge declares them to be permissible (istahallahaa), then he**

has disbelieved, when he states (qaala) that they are lawful (halaal), and there is no harm in them, this is what becomes kufr (disbelief). Whoever

declares to be lawful (istahalla) what Allaah has made unlawful has disbelieved" [Muraaji'at Fi Fiqh ul-Waqi' as-Siyasi wal-Fikri (12) by 'Abdullaah ar-Rifa'i]

And as for Shaikh Ibn Uthaimeen, whose words have been selectively chosen and quoted by the neo-Kharijites, then his methodology is in agreement with the two Imaams, for he too, does not hasten in takfir, even when it is established that an outward act of major kufr has been committed. He said:

"And this matter, - meaning judging by other than that which Allaah has sent down - is from the great matters which rulers of this time have been afflicted with widely, **so it is upon a person that he does not hasten in passing judgement upon them with something that they do not deserve until the truth is clear to him because this matter is dangerous.** We ask Allaah the Exalted that he corrects for the Muslims, those who have been appointed over their affairs. Just as it is upon the person whom Allaah has given knowledge to, to make it clear to those rulers **in order for the truth to be established upon them, and for the clear way to be apparent** - so whoever is to go to destruction may do so upon clear evidence and whoever lives may do so upon clear evidence - and he should not belittle himself and stop himself from making it clear, nor should he have fear of anybody concerning that because Might/Honour is for Allaah and His Messenger and the believers." [Majmoo Fataawaa Ibn Uthaimeen]

He also said,

"As regards the one who lays down legislative laws, despite his knowing the judgement of Allaah and that these laws are contrary to Allaah's judgement - **then this person has substituted these laws in place of the Sharee`ah.** Therefore he is a kaafir - this **because he does not choose these laws and turn away from Allaah's Sharee`ah except due to his belief that they are better for the people and the land than the law of Allaah. But when we say that he is a kaafir, then the meaning of this is that this action leads to disbelief. However the one who [legislates these rules] may have an excuse** - for example he may be one who has been deluded: such that it has been said to him that this does not conflict with Islaam, or that it is something allowable as a case of benefitting the people (masaalih al-mursala), or that it is something that Islaam has left up to the [custom of] the people. So there are some scholars - even though they are in error - who say that social transaction (mu`aamalaat) is something not dealt with by Islaam, and that rather it is referred to whatever is found to benefit the economy in each particular time. So if the situation requires us to establish usury banks or to tax the people then there is no problem with this. There is no doubt concerning the error of [such a claim]. So if these people performed ijtihaad then may Allaah forgive them. Otherwise they are in a situation of very great danger and it is befitting that they are entitled `scholars of the state' and not `scholars of the Religion.'" [Al-Qawl ul-Mufeed alaa Kitab ut-Tawhid]

He also said about the one who establishes secular law, **"Sometimes it can be his fear of not undertaking this act on account of people who are stronger than him - that makes him undertake this act. So here he would be compromising with them. So here we would say that such a one is like those who compromise with respect to the other sins."** [Fitnah of Takfir of Imaam al-Albani]

He also said, "And there is a doubt (shubhah) with many of the youth, which has become firmly and deeply rooted in their minds and it has kindled the issue of revolting against the rulers - and it is: **that those rulers replace the Sharee'ah (haa'ulaa il-Hukkaam mubaddiloon), they prescribe the (secular) laws from themselves and they do not rule by what Allaah has revealed and the rule is present - but they prescribed laws from themselves. So (these youth) judged them with apostasy and disbelief... So the answer to this doubt** is that we say: There is no escaping from that we know firstly: Does the description of apostasy apply to them or not? And this requires knowing the evidences which indicate that this saying or action is apostasy, then applying them to an individual, and then, whether this individual has any doubts (which may excuse him) or not? Meaning: **Sometimes a text can indicate that this action is kufr and this saying is kufr, but there are preventive barriers which prevent the application of the ruling of kufr upon this specific individual.**" [Fitnah of Takfir of Imaam al-Albani]

So in the above texts it is clear that ruling by other than what Allaah has revealed, replacing the Sharee'ah and referring to secular law in and of itself – in the view of Shaikh Ibn Uthaimeen - is not sufficient to make unconditioned takfir of a specific individual.

So it is because of this that the neo-Khawarij have slandered these noble scholars and mountains of knowledge and have labelled them with Irjaa'!!

But the truth of the matter is that though the Salafis consider the aforementioned acts to be very great and serious sins and that they constitute major disbelief when they are accompanied with certain beliefs and conditions of the heart, such as declaring that to be permissible (istihlal), or claiming that secular law is superior, or disliking the Shar'iah, or claiming one has a choice in the matter, or displaying wilful opposition (juhood) or arrogance etc. – they, unlike the newly-arisen foolish minded ones do not hasten towards or show great boldness towards performing takfir of a specific individual guilty of this, unless the likes of the Imaams mentioned above have explicitly performed takfir of such an individual. And even in the case of replacing the Shari'ah or referring to the secular law, it is possible that the act may be kufr doona kufr (the lesser kufr) and likewise the minor dhulm and minor fisq and this is abundantly clear from the quotations above, those which the newly-arisen foolish minded have pretended to be ignorant of.

And because of this approach, the basis of which is the fear of Allaah and the concern and care for the welfare of Muslim men, women and children, and the preponderance of good - and what this necessitates in the twisted eyes of those strayers –they have labelled the Salafis as Murji'ah!! But as for those who have no shame and nor any fear of Allaah and who direct the Muslim Ummah – the sincere unsuspecting men, women and youth - to incitement, public demonstrations, belittlement of the Senior Scholars (that they do not understand the current affairs), violent revolutions, and to their destruction, rape and pillage, such as what happened in Algeria – then they are the only existing true scholars on the face of this earth??!!! And they are the one who truly understand the state of affairs!??

So it is in light of all of this, that this evil practice of calling the Salafi Ulamaa Murji'ah, ought to be rooted out and put to an end. And the reality is that these neo-Kharijites neither understand the reality of Imaan and nor do they actually understand what exactly are the false beliefs of the Murji'ah. Yet, this great crime of theirs has resulted in the lowly and despicable ones claming about the likes of the great Imaam al-Albani that he is worse in his Irjaa' than Jahm ibn

Safwaan!! May Allaah blacken the face of every innovator and heretic who shows enmity to the legacy of the Salaf of today.

The one who contemplates what follows below with a sincere heart and a desire for the truth, will see that the noble Imaams of knowledge of this time and their followers are free from Irjaa', both its beginning and its end.

The Text

Shaikh Alee Hasan al-Halabi said in Saihatu Nadhir (p24-27):

Al-Khallaal reports in as-Sunnah (959,960,961), and also al-Aajurree in ash-Sharee'ah (340) from Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal – rahimahullaah – that he was asked concerning the Murji'ah. He replied: "The one who says, 'Imaan, faith, is speech'."

Al-Laalikaa'ee reports in as-Sunnah (1837) and al-Aajurree in ash-Sharee'ah (342) from the Imaam Wakee Ibn al-Jarraah ar-Ru'usi that he said: "Ahl us-Sunnah are the ones who say Imaan consists of speech and action. The Murji'ah say Imaan is speech (only)! And the Jahmiyyah say Imaan is acquaintance (ma'rifah)!"

Imaam Al-Aajurree said (1/312), after reporting this narration and others: "Beware – may Allaah have mercy upon you – of the one who says that his Imaan is like the Imaan of Jibreel and Mikaa'eel! And of the one who says 'I am a believer [in truth] in the sight of Allaah!' or 'I am a believer who is perfect in Imaan!' All of this is from the madhhab of Irjaa'"

Ibn al-Bannaa reports in al-Mukhtar fi Usul us-Sunnah of (p.89) that Imaam Ahmad was asked about the one who says 'Imaan increases and decreases'. He said, **'Such a one is free from Irjaa'.**"

Imaam al-Barbahari said: **"Whoever says, 'Imaan is speech and action, it increases and decreases' has left Irjaa', all of it, both its beginning and its end'."** (Sharh us-Sunnah p.132).

As for the statements of Shaikh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah in explanation of the aqidah of the Murji'ah and manifesting its corrupt nature, then they are very many. Amongst them is his saying – may Allaah have mercy upon him: "And the Salaf's rejection of the Murji'ah was severe indeed, since they removed actions from Imaan and they said, 'The people are equal with respect to Imaan!' And there is no doubt that their statement about the uniformity of Imaan in every person is one of most repugnant of errors." [Majmoo Fatawaa (5/555-556)].

And he also said,

"The Murji'ah – **in all of their variant sects** – claim that committing major sins and abandoning the outward obligatory duties do not cause Imaan to decrease. Since if anything of it went, then none of it would remain. Therefore it is but a single entity! The sinner and righteous one are equal with respect to it." [Majmoo Fatawaa (7/223)].

I say: What has preceded of narrations and aathaar from the Salaf is sufficient for the person of truth and removes any need from the one who seeks what is correct. However, responding to the request made to me by one of the eminent ones from the People of Knowledge – may Allaah reward him – I will narrate in addition the words of Shaikh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah in his great book 'al-

Imaan' [found in Majmoo Fataawaa 7/195-205 with summary] in which he explains – may Allaah have mercy upon him - with comprehensive words, the various types of Murji'ah, and the variety of their futile beliefs, those that everyone whose intellect has been enlightened with the pure Sunnah will free himself from and from their deviation.

So he said – may Allaah have mercy upon him: "And among the Murji'ah, those who said that Imaan is tasdiq, assent, in the heart and an utterance of the tongue but does not include works, was a group of jurists from Kufah. Their claims were not like those of Jahm, for they recognised that one is not a believer if, although he is able to express his belief verbally, he does not do so. They also acknowledged that Iblis, Pharaoh, and others were unbelievers despite the fact that they believed the truth in their hearts. However, if they did not include the works of the heart in their definition of Imaan, belief, they would have been obliged to adopt the view of Jahm. If, on the other hand, they did include such 'works of the hearts' in their understanding of Imaan, belief, then they would have needed to include the works of the parts of the body as well, since such outward works are necessarily associated with those of the heart."

Then he said,

"And they (the Murji'ah) say: We profess that Imaan increases. That is, every time Allah sends down a verse, it should be accepted. Thus, this acceptance will be combined with the acceptance that precedes it. However, after the completion of the revelation, no one's Imaan will be greater than anyone else's. That is, all peoples' Imaan becomes the same no matter what everyone's belief is, be it the belief of the earliest believers such as Abu Bakr (al-Siddiq) and Umar (Ibn al-Khattab), or that of the most immoral of people, such as al-Hajjaj (Ibn Yusuf), Abu Muslim al-Khurasani, and others.

The Murji'ah, especially the theologians and jurists from among them, regarded works as part of Imaan in a figurative way, for a work is the fruit and requirement of Imaan. They defended this argument by referring to the Prophet's saying: 'Imaan has sixty or seventy branches, the highest of which is the declaration that there is no god but Allah, and the lowest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the path' and claiming that this is figurative (majaaz)!

The Murji'ah were of three views: The first was that Imaan is merely what is in the heart. Most of them believed that works of the heart contribute to Imaan, as indicated in the book of Abu al-Hassan al-Ash'ari. He also mentioned many other sects whose listing would be lengthy, although the author states that he has mentioned most of their statements. This view does not include works as part of Imaan. This was the opinion of Jahm and of those who followed him, such as as-Salihi, who, along with his followers, were great supporters of him [Jahm]. The second view states that Imaan is a mere utterance of the tongue. This position was not known prior to the opinions of the Karramiyyah sect. The third view states that Imaan is tasdiq, assent, of the heart and a saying of the tongue. This was the most well-known position among them. Indeed, this was the prevailing belief among the jurists and the worshipers of the Murji'ah. However, they erred in all of this from three angles:

The first is their [the Murji'ah's] assumption that the Imaan that Allah requires of us is equal for all Allah's servants, and that the belief incumbent upon one person is likewise required of another. This assumption is false, for the followers of the earlier Prophets were required by Allah to have a kind of belief that was not required of Muhammad's community, just as the belief required of Muhammad's

community was not the same as that required of still others. And the type of Imaan that was required prior to the revelation of all of the Qur'aan is different from the Imaan required after the revelation. For the Imaan required of someone who knew what the Messenger was told in detail would not be the same as that required of someone who knew what the Messenger was told in general..."

Then he said – may Allaah have mercy upon him:

"The second aspect of the false argument of the Murji'ah is their belief that Imaan is only in the heart is tasdiq, assent, without any works of the heart, which has already been pointed out in the previous discussion concerning the opinion of the Jahmiyyah, who followed Jahm.

The third false argument is that they [the Murji'ah] thought that Imaan that is in the heart is complete without any works. So they regarded works as the product and necessary outgrowth of Imaan, in the rank of cause and effect, but not as an essential requirement for Imaan. And what is correct is that the complete Imaan of the heart must be accompanied by righteous works and Imaan of the heart is never perfect without them. For this reason, the Murji'ah presumed the possibility of matters that never occurred due to their failure to affirm the connection between the body and the heart. For example, they said a man may have Imaan in his heart similar to that of Abu Bakr [al-Siddiq] and Umar [Ibn al-Khattab], although he neither prostrates nor fasts during Ramadan, fornicates with his mother and his sister, and drinks wine in the daylight hours of Ramadan. They [the Murji'ah] say that such a man has complete Imaan. On the contrary, all believers would absolutely deny such a claim."

And in Majmoo Fataawaa (7/637) is a very great statement of Shaikh ul-Islaam in which he explains the correct meaning of Imaan, faith, and in which he refutes the opposers of the truth. So he said – may Allaah have mercy upon him:

"It (Imaan, faith) is made up of

- A **basis (asl)** without which it cannot be complete
- **Obligatory [duties] (wajib)**, whose neglect cause Imaan to be deficient and render the one guilty of this punishable
- **Recommended [duties] (mustahabb)** whose absence cause the greatness of rank to be lost.

And amongst the people are those who wrong their own souls, those who are just in between (following a middle course), and those who are foremost (in goodness) [with respect to their relation to entities and acts such as] hajj, the physical body, the mosque and other such entities, actions and characteristics. And from its various elements [i.e. those that constitute Imaan] are those which if they are not present will reduce it [from being] most perfect, and those which will cause it to fall short of **perfection** – and this is **abandoning the obligatory duties** and falling into the forbidden matters.

And from it [i.e. the various elements of Imaan] is that which will cause its **basis (rukhn)** to be impaired, and that is the abandoning of **belief (i'tiqad)** and **speech (qawl)** – and which the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah claim to be [what justifies] the appellation [of Imaan].

And by this [classification] will the doubts of all the sects be put to an end. **The foundation (asl) [of Imaan] is in the heart and its perfection lies in the outward actions**, in opposition to Islam since its basis is what is external and its perfection lies in the heart..."

I say: And these words of his – may Allaah have mercy upon him – are sufficient for the people of truth, will bring healing to the diseased souls, and are adequate for the followers of guidance ... and whoever contradicts this, or disputes it, then has departed from justice and has behaved haphazardly (deviously). And it is said to him:

And how many are there who find fault with a correct saying
There criticism coming only from a faulty understanding

I say: These are words (i.e. of Shaikh ul-Islam). No addition is made to them [to interpolate them] except that it constitutes a fabrication against the Muslims, a great slander against the unsuspecting righteous ones and exceeding the bounds against the servants of Allaah with suspicion... and it is in front of Allaah that all the disputants will be gathered.

END OF QUOTE FROM SAIHATU NADHIR